

If God's Word is a Priority, Part 1 - Acts 28:11-15 – October 31st, 2010

- I've been looking forward to both the beginning of this new series here in Acts, and completing what's been a four year study of Acts.
- I can't think of a better way to end the book of Acts then to do a series on the importance of making God's Word a priority in our lives.

- It's for this reason I've titled this series; "If God's Word is a Priority." I hope to identify what exemplifies a prioritization of God's Word.
- In the text before us the life of Paul will become an example to us of what it is to have the Word of God in its rightful place in our life.
- Here again the Apostle Paul will rise from the pages of Holy Writ to teach us by the Holy Spirit what to expect if God's Word is a priority.

1. I'll devote time to it (Verses 11-13)

11 After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. 12 We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. 13 From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli.

- v11 After wintering for three months on the island they set sail on an Alexandrian ship with figures of the pagan gods Castor and Pollux.
- v12-13 After a 3 day stay in Syracuse they set sail for Rhegium. After a south wind comes they set out and reach Puteoli two days later.
- This would indicate that this Alexandrian ship and its captain decided to do what those on Paul's ship didn't do and wait out the winter.

- It's important to understand that their ill fated decision to continue on, to their own peril, was made against Paul's advice to wait instead.
- I would suggest that God gave Paul a specific word of knowledge as it related to his journey to Rome in order to testify before Caesar.
- Also, if you remember, it was because of "God's Word" to Paul that these men didn't perish at sea and were "saved" in the first place.
- Here's what I'm thinking; Paul's devotion to the scriptures was evidence of the place of priority it had in his life and the decisions of life.

Psalm 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. KJV

2. I'll have a love for it (Verses 14-15a)

14 There we found some brothers who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. 15 The brothers there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us...

- v14 We're told that, upon their arrival in Rhegium, they find brothers who invite them to spend a week together before going to Rome.
- v15a Luke tells us some brothers heard they were coming and traveled from Appiforum and Three Taverns some 30-50 miles away.
- What's interesting is, these brothers are from Rome, and the reason they knew Paul, was because of his Epistle to the church in Rome.

"The news of his arrival reached the brethren in Rome during the week of Paul's halting at Puteoli, and parties at once set out to meet him. this was thoughtful love, and showed that they were not ashamed to be identified with Christ's suffering servant." Charles Spurgeon

- Not only did they have a love for Paul, they had a love for God's Word because of Paul who was inspired by God to write that letter.
- I find it interesting that their love for God's Word would propel them to travel long distances to meet the Apostle commissioned to pen it.
- I see this with those of you who've made this your home church. You traveled long distances because of your love of the Word of God.

3. I'll be thankful and encouraged by it (Verse 15b)

15b ...At the sight of these men Paul thanked God and was encouraged.

- v15b Luke tells us that when Paul saw these brothers who had traveled from afar to see him, he was encouraged and thanked God.
- It's always refreshing to me when a verse or passage of scripture gives us insight into the emotions of the men and women of God.
- Here, Luke records a personal account of the Apostle Paul's emotional state, and lets us catch a little glimpse of what he was like.

- If you're like me, you probably have an image of the beloved Apostle as being this fearless, immovable and unemotional man of God.
- While he was most certainly like that, he was also just like anyone else in that he was prone to become discouraged and even fearful.
- These men were a most welcome site to Paul's tired eyes. So much so, that he was thankful to God for them, and encouraged by them.

- I believe God knew that Paul needed this, at such a time as this, and this thankfulness and encouragement came via the Word of God.
- In other words it was from men who were Romans! So too will I be thankful and encouraged by books like Romans in the Word of God.
- The Bible has promises that if God's Word is prioritized in my life, thanksgiving and encouragement will be characterized by my life.

Luke 24:13-32 Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. (14) They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. (15) As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; (16) but they were kept from recognizing him. (17) He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. (18) One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" (19) "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. (20) The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; (21) but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. (22) In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning (23) but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. (24) Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." (25) He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! (26) Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" (27) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (28) As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. (29) But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. (30) When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. (31) Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. (32) They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" NIV